

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE BARTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

February 23, 2009

The monthly meeting of the Berks Area Reading Transportation Authority was held at BARTA headquarters located at 1700 N. 11th Street, Reading, Pennsylvania.

The regular monthly meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM by Mr. Philip D. Rowe, Vice-Chairman.

The following board members were present: Mr. Ron Seaman, Mr. Dave Berry, Mr. Jake Bowers; Treasurer and Mr. James Schlegel.

Others attending the meeting were: Dennis D. Louwerse, Executive Director/CEO, Kevin Hessler, Director of Finance, Laura Hopko, Director of Administration and Human Resources, Robert Fletcher, Assistant Executive Director, Janet Weiss, Manager of Programs and Marketing, Vicki Weidner, Director of Special Services, Richard L. Orwig, Solicitor, and Kathey Cahill, Executive Secretary. Others present were William Frees and John Doerrman from the Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 1345 and Darin Youker from the Reading Eagle.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board minutes of Feb. 2, 2009 as distributed by mail, were approved on a motion by Mr. Jake Bowers and seconded by Mr. Dave Berry. There were no opposing votes and therefore the motion was carried unanimously by the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO

In Harrisburg, Governor Rendell presented his 2009-2010 budget proposals to the general assembly on February 3, 2009. On February 19, 2009 the Appropriations Committee of the House held a hearing on transportation, specifically a presentation by Secretary Bieler, the Turnpike Commission and public transit. A couple of important issues were discussed such as the falling revenues as relates to gas tax and registration funds for PA.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Bowers presented this report.

The previous report balance as of January 23, 2009 was **\$2,026,722.73**. The current cash receipts are **\$704,442.42**. ACH /Transfers into Checking Account were **\$256,595.10**. Interest earned : **\$3,324.32**. Total receipts: **\$964,361.84**. Total Funds available were **\$2,991,084.57**. Current checks issued were **\$735,087.56**. EFT/Transfers from checking account total **\$403,318.59** for a disbursement of **\$1,138,406.15**. Balance reported as of February 17, 2009: **\$1,852,678.42**.

The Board took a few moments to look over the checks from the past month. A motion to accept the

December 2008 checks was made by Mr. Jake Bowers and seconded by Mr. James Schlegel. There were no objections, and the motion was passed unanimously by the Board.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE REPORT

Mr. Hessler presented his report.

The year-to-date total operating revenue for year-to-date ending January 31, 2009 was **\$3,305,017** versus the budget amount of **\$3,494,489** which means we're **\$-189,472** or **-5.4%** under budget. Our total operating expenses for the same period was **\$8,343,367** versus the budgeted amount of **\$8,877,951** which means we're **\$-534,584** or **-6.0%** under budget. The operating deficit for the year-to-date was **\$5,038,350** which is **\$-345,112** or **-6.4%** under budget.

COMMITTEE & STAFF REPORTS

Operations Report

Mr. Fletcher presented this report.

The operating data for January 2009 indicates that the total system ridership decreased by **8.3%** when compared to January 2008. There is a **8.0%** decrease in the fixed route passengers and a **11.9%** decrease in special service passengers. For the month of January on the fixed route service, we experienced a **7.2%** decrease in the revenue passengers, and a **12.3%** increase in senior citizen rides.

In the fixed route division there were 21 weekdays and 5 Saturdays operated in January 2009 as compared to 22 weekdays and 4 Saturdays in January, 2008. In the special services division there were 22 weekdays operated in December 2008 as compared to 20 weekdays operated in December 2007.

The average weekday ridership for January, 2009 was 9,251 as compared to 9,837 in January, 2008.

For the fiscal year, the total system ridership increased **4.9%**. The fixed route ridership has increased **5.2%**. This is composed of a **6.0%** increase in revenue passengers and a **1.9%** increase in senior citizen rides. The special service passengers increased **1.7%**.

Special Services Report

Ms. Weidner presented this report.

The report showed that the total Special Services Division ridership for January was **17,079**; a **11.9%** decrease compared to the same month of 2008. Year-to-date figures show a **1.7%** increase when compared to the last fiscal year. With twenty-one (21) operating days, an average of 813 passengers were transported per day.

Special Projects Report

Mr. Louwerse presented this report in Mr. Roebuck's absence. He noted that February 2, 2009 was the first day the new paratransit software went 'live'. Mr. Louwerse indicated that the switch has probably been better than anticipated.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

The Board took a few minutes to review various articles compiled by Mrs. Weiss regarding issues relating to BARTA and transportation in Pennsylvania.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Commuter Services Update: It is anticipated that on April 1, 2009, the Commuter Services activities will begin in Berks County.

American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) – Mr. Louwerse reported that President Obama signed the bill into law on February 17, 2009. The package provides \$5.44 billion for the Urban Formula Program for transit capital projects. The FTA must publish the final allocation within twenty-one (21) days of signing. Mr. Louwerse provided a project list based on BARTA's project allocation of \$4,272,356. BARTA has four (4) PROJECTS. Mr. Louwerse requested the Board's approval of the "BARTA Project List" and authorization to proceed with all required actions. A motion was made by Mr. Bowers to accept these projects. It was seconded by Mr. Schlegel. A unanimous vote followed and the motion was passed.

NEW BUSINESS

R-6 Rail Service Report & Support Traffic and Revenue Study- Mr. Louwerse provided to each Board member an R-6 Norristown Extension Information Packet. He noted that a media briefing was held on Friday February 20, 2009 in Norristown. Mr. Louwerse reviewed the briefing document. He noted that the next step was to conduct a preliminary Traffic and Revenue Study regarding the tolling of 422. Potential tolls would fund highway improvements and the rail project. The study will be paid for with federal SVM Project funds. PennDOT will provide \$62,500 and Berks, Chester and Montgomery Counties need to provide \$62,500 of the local \$62,500 the Philadelphia CEO Council has committed \$12,500. The counties will need to fund between \$16,000 and \$18,000. As relates to Berks County, BARTA has an R-6 Technical Studies project to provide Berks County's share. The Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Berks Economic Partnership have both committed \$1,000. Mr. Louwerse respectfully requested that the Board approve that BARTA provide the balance of funds required by Berks County for this study.

On a motion made by Mr. Bowers and seconded by Mr. Berry the motion was unanimously approved. After the vote, Mr. Louwerse advised the Board that Berks County Commissioners requested he express their thanks to BARTA Board for their willingness to provide funds for the study and support for this project.

OTHER BUSINESS

State Assurance Resolution - Mr. Louwerse presented the Standard State Assurance Resolution regarding Section 1517 funds. On a motion by Mr. Bowers and seconded by Mr. Seaman, the resolution was unanimously approved.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathey Cahill, Executive Secretary for
Jayne L. Dieruff, Secretary, Berks Area Reading Transit Authority